

Message Text

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ACTION FBO-08

INFO OCT-01 AF-05 ISO-00 A-01 /015 W

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P 181452Z SEP 74(5

FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8883

UNCLAS SAMEY 3143

FOR FBO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ABLD, NG

SUBJECT: PROPERTY NO. 01559-AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE: REPAIR OF
HOT WATER SYSTEM

1. SINCE MAY AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE HAS BEEN PLAGUED BY VARIETY WATER PROBLEMS AND ONE WAY OR ANOTHER SUPPLY HAS BEEN TOTALLY INADEQUATE. LATEST DEVELOPMENT IS THAT DURING PAST SIX WEEKS HOT WATER SYSTEM HAS DEVELOPED TWO SERIOUS LEAKS IN WALLS AND UNDER FLOORING. FIRST LEAK DEVELOPED IN HALLWAY CONNECTING GROUND FLOOR GUEST BEDROOM WITH ENTRANCE FOYER. FLOOR IN CONNECTING HALLWAY IS EXTREMELY HOT INDICATING LARGE LEAK WITH ACCUMULATION OF HOT WATER UNDER FLOOR. SECOND LEAK HAS DEVELOPED SOMEWHERE BETWEEN BASE OF SMALL STAIRWELL LEADING TO UNDERGROUND UTILITY ROOM AND KITCHEN. WATER IS LEAKING RAPIDLY INTO STAIRWELL AND UTILITY ROOM AND PRELIMINARY PROBES INTO THE WALL HAVE FAILED TO REACH THE LEAK.

2. LEAKS IMPOSSIBLE TO REACH WITHOUT EXTENSIVE CUTTING AND THUS DAMAGE TO WALLS AND FLOORS SINCE THERE IS NO BASEMENT AND NO WATER PIPE ACCESS TUNNELS UNDER THE RESIDENCE. ORIGINAL PLANS CALLED FOR TUNNELS LIKE THOSE INSTALLED IN CHANCERY BUT THEY WERE OMITTED. LOCAL PLUMBING EXPERTS WHO ORIGINALLY INSTALLED HOT WATER SYSTEM HAVE AGREED THAT ONLY OPTION IS TO BEGIN BREAKING THROUGH FLOORING. THEY ALSO POINT OUT THAT WEAKNESS OF ORIGINAL WELDED COPPER PIPE UTILIZED IN RESIDENCE COULD RESULT IN

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REPEATED PROBLEMS OF THIS NATURE IN FUTURE. ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS ARE THAT TERRAZZO FLOORING CANNOT BE REPRODUCED LOCALLY SINCE MATCHING MARBLE IS NOT FOUND HERE, ITALIAN ARTISANS WHICH ORIGINALLY LAID FLOOR ARE GONE AND SOPHISTICATED MACHINERY REQUIRED IS NO LONGER AVAILABLE LOCALLY.

3. POST IS ALSO CONCERNED OVER POTENTIAL STRUCTURAL DAMAGE TO RESIDENCE IF DEEP EXCAVATION INTO WALLS AND FLOORING OF RESIDENCE MADE WITHOUT PREPARATION AND SUPERVISION BY QUALIFIED PERSONNEL.

4. POST HAS CONSULTED ALL LOCAL EXPERTS AND HAS REACHED POINT WHERE MAJOR DECISIONS REQUIRED WHICH LOCAL EXPERTS NOT IZT NOT COMPETENT TO MAKE. THEREFORE, POST URGENTLY REQUESTS DISPATCH BY FBO OF QUALIFIED ENGINEER TO NIAMEY TO MAKE ON-THE-SPOT ANALYSIS OF PROBLEM AND TO RECOMMEND REPAIRS, COUNTERMEASURES OF LARGE-SCALE CHANGES.HECK

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

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